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WILD KAKWA

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TO:

THE HONORABLE WILLIAM YURKO
MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT

A PROPOSAL TO PROTECT THE KAKWA FALLS REGION OF WEST/CENTRAL ALBERTA THROUGH DESIGNATION AS A "RESTRICTED DEVELOPMENT AREA" PURSUANT TO SECTION 15: THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT ACT.

MARCH, 1972

SUBMITTED BY THE CONSERVATION SOCIETY
"WILD KAKWA"

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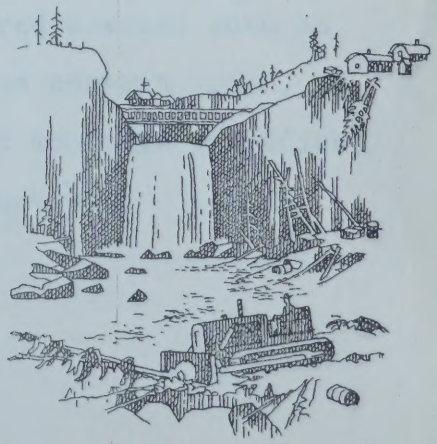
cc: Dr. Allan Warrack;
Minister of Lands and Forests.

Dr. Winston Backus;
Minister of Public Works.

Hon. Robert Dowling;
Minister in charge of Tourism.

Dr. Walter Trost, Chairman;
Environment Conservation Authority.



Alberta's Future - A Society
icated to Saving Wilderness in the Peace

THE AREA...

The area of concern is the most northerly portion of the Rocky Mountain chain within Alberta. It is the only relatively-unspoiled mountainous region readily accessible to residents of the fast-growing Peace River country. Although rich in mineral and timber resources, the region's greater significance involves environmental values and a potential for recreational development. This submission is concerned with a total area of about 20 townships, as outlined on the map on Page 3.

ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE...

The region contains significant headwaters to the Peace River. The Torrens and Narraway rivers are important tributaries of the Wapiti and their protection is vital to a supply of pure water for the city of Grande Prairie. The Kakwa River has much significance as a major tributary of the Smoky River, and thence the Peace.

The region contains habitat for bighorn sheep, caribou, mountain goats, and endangered species such as the grizzly bear and wolf. The streams contain trout, Arctic grayling, Dolly Varden char and mountain whitefish, all requiring pure, clear water for survival.

SCENIC AND RECREATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS...

The scenic values of this region rival those of the mountain national parks. Several waterfalls, chief among them being the upper falls on the Kakwa, are within a few minutes' walk of the road. Fishing is excellent in the myriad streams and rivers and hunting is fair. Existing roads provide good access to areas for hiking, mountain climbing and nature study groups.

At the Porcupine crossing of the Kakwa, in the region's eastern portion, are Indian gravesites deserving of protection. One proposed route of the new highway between Grande Prairie and Grande Cache would touch upon the eastern boundary of the proposed area for restricted development.

GENERAL CONCERNS...

Resource development, particularly involving coal exploration, already has created severe and no doubt irreparable damage to the region's environmental values. Mountain tops are being disfigured by trenches, overburden is being dumped into ravines and systems of crude roads and creek crossings are rampant. Last summer, various citizens of this province were turned back from using a public road because an oil well was being drilled in the middle of it. There appears to be no development co-ordination and less consideration for environmental or recreational values.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS...

1. The area described upon the accompanying map should be designated a "Restricted Development Area" as per Section 15, The Department of the Environment Act.

2. All new development, including further exploration for minerals or petroleum, should be curtailed until completion and assessment of the Foothills Land Use Allocation Study.

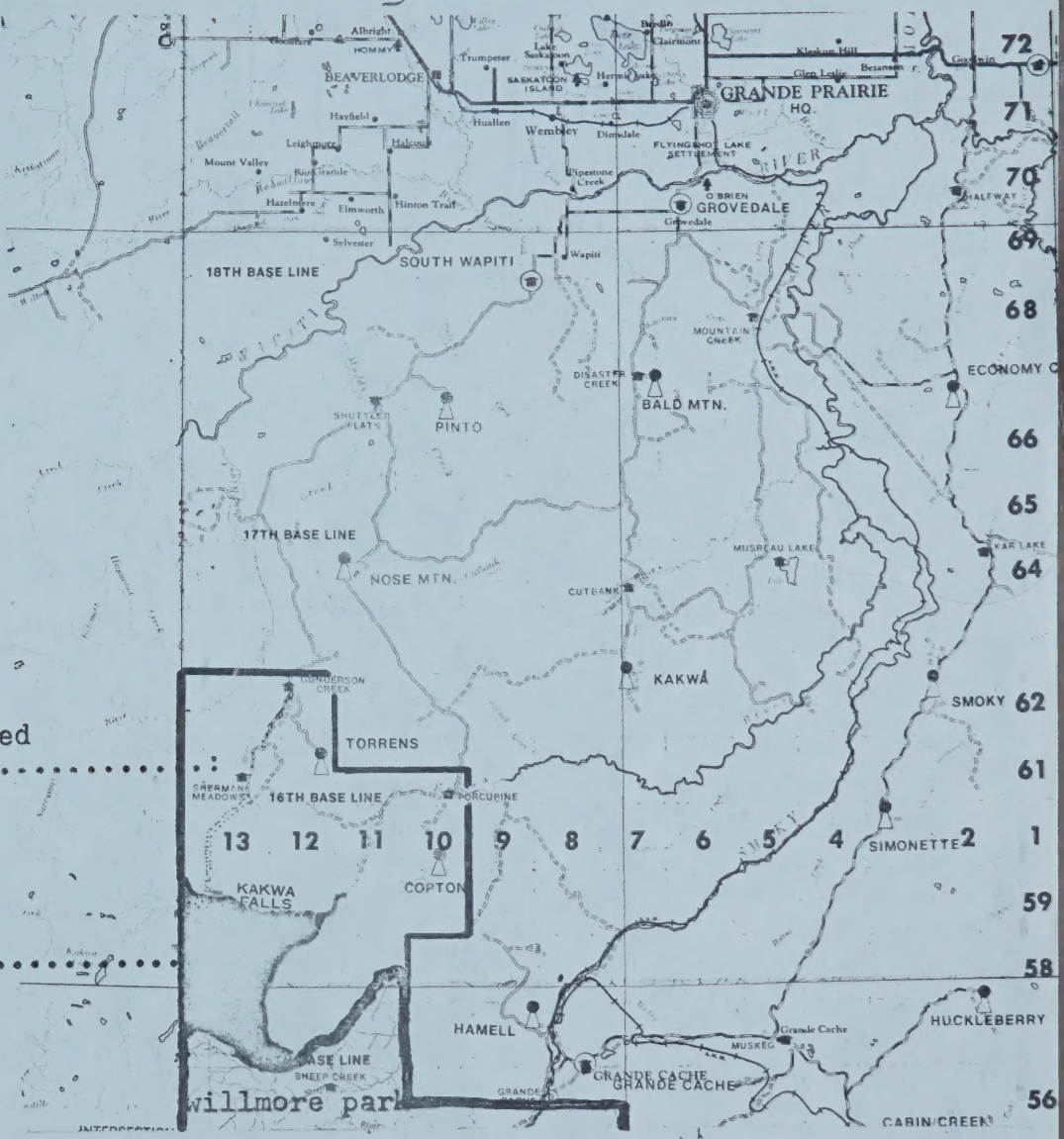
3. Any and all proposals for development subsequent to the assessment of that study should be referred to the Environment Conservation Authority for study, with a specific view to:
   a. Ensuring proper environmental protection and due consideration of the recreational aspects involved.
   b. Ensuring the necessary public participation in decisions concerning the region -- as demanded by the thousands of persons whose support for this proposal is in evidence.

4. It is our understanding local forestry officials have recommended a provincial park in the Dinosaur Ridge area. Pursuant to acceptance by the resource allocation study, we are in general support of this proposal.

WILD KAKWA

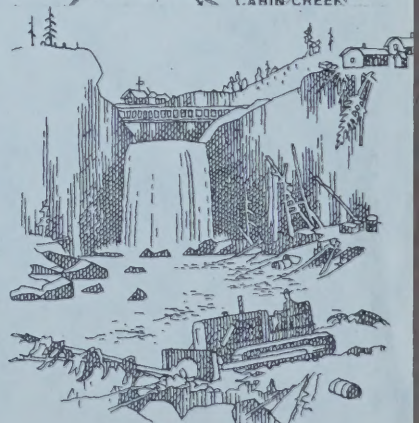
P. O. Box 212

Grande Prairie, Alberta



Proposed Restricted Development Area.....

Proposed KAKWA WILDERNESS AREA .....



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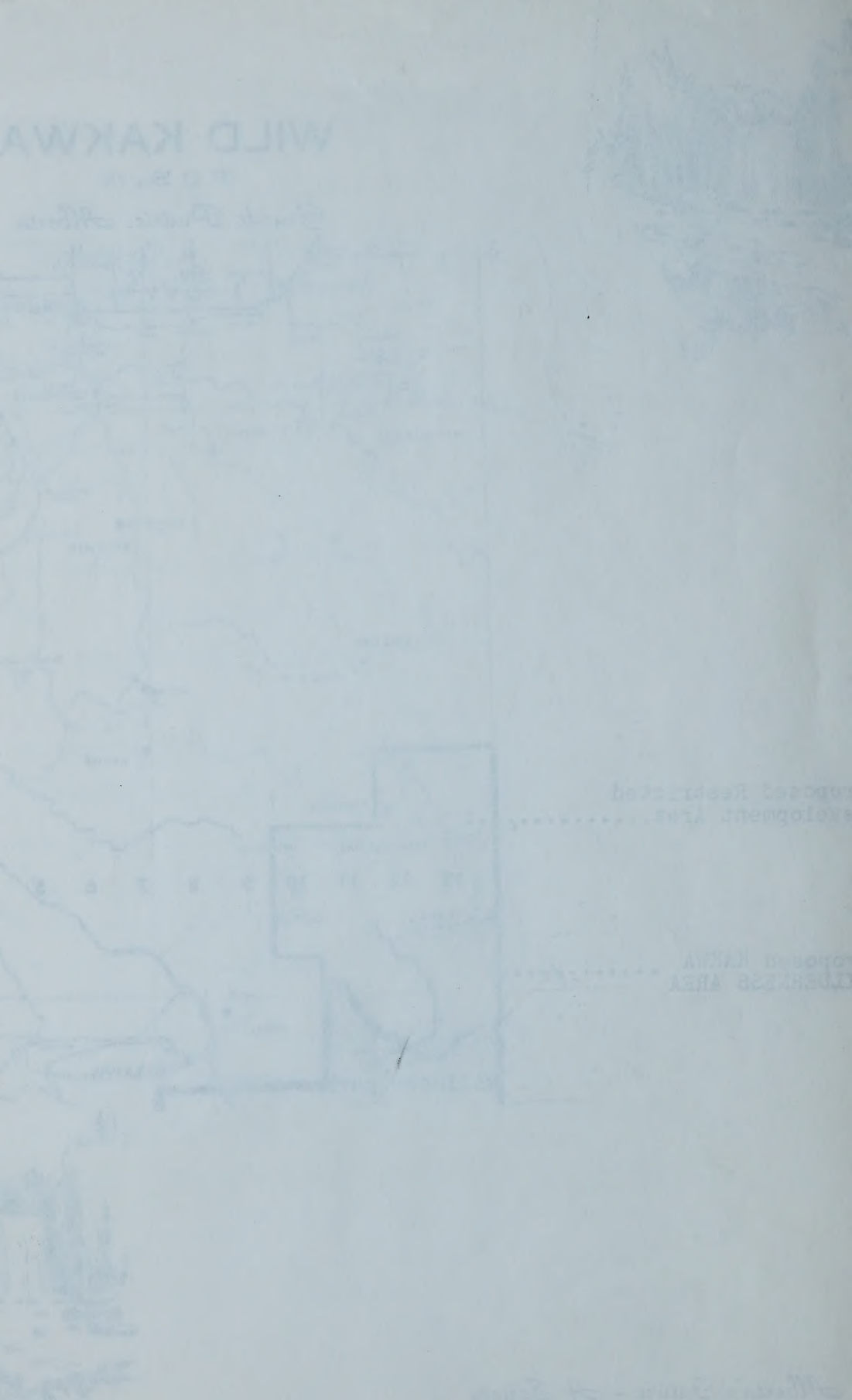

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